



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: February 18, 2003
To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Referral to: Honorable Barb Johnson, Chair Ways & Means Committee.

Subject: Lane Use Report

Recommendation:

1. Inform T&PW status of Lane Use Policy.
2. Present the web based program and authorize its placement on the City Web Site

Previous Directives:

- Petn No. 266994/Resolution 2001R-231
- Obstruction Permit Fee Structure by adopted by resolution April 17, 1997
- Right of Way Ordinance 96-OR-125 & 126 April 11, 1997

Prepared by: Doug Maday Transportation, 673-5755

Approved by: Brian Lokkesmoe, P.E., City Engineer, Interim Director of Public Works

Presenters: Doug Maday Supervisor of Engineering Technicians II
Jon Wertjes, Engineer III

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

☒ No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget.
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)

☐ Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget

☐ Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget

☐ Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase

☐ Action requires use of contingency or reserves

☐ Other financial impact (Explain):

☐ Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Background/Supporting Information:

During the spring and summer of 2000 the traffic congestion in Minneapolis reached a point that traveling one or two city blocks became an excruciating task. The reasons being numerous but the more critical problem areas were the 21 building construction sites that were using the city right of way for their staging of materials thus using valuable driving lanes and pedestrian walkways. On top of that during the summers of 1999 and 2000 an aggressive underground fiber optic utility project took place in and on the downtown city streets thus closing more traffic lanes and sidewalks.

In September of 2000 a contingent of city employees representing City Council, Regulatory Services, and Public Works visited 14 building sites in the central business district. The goal being to observe and assess the use and needs of these sites. What was found were numerous violations and unwarranted waste of city right of way at a majority of the sites. This included delivery vehicles stopping in moving traffic lanes outside of the already granted right of way they were granted. Out of these visits it was deemed that something needed to be done. A committee of individuals from all aspects of the city was formed to study ways to improve the on street situations causing the congestion. It was found that an ordinance existed that would allow the city to charge companies for the use of the city right of way. After many meetings by this committee a policy was drafted in May of 2000 and approved (petn no 266994) on June 8, 2000. The new policy was put into effect August 1, 2000 which allowed the city to charge for the use of city right of way by contractors for doing work on city streets and sidewalks.

Activities and Efforts Since August 2000

In order to manage and enforce this policy Regulatory Services hired 3 Traffic Control Agents and 1 clerical position and Public Works Transportation hired 2 Engineering Technicians and utilized the 1 Engineering Technician already in place. The creation of this policy has greatly benefited the city and the thousands of people who access the downtown on a daily basis for work or play. The traffic congestion may still be there but implementation of the Lane Use policy has improved the travel times in and out of the downtown area considerably. The delays experienced today are no where near the levels of 1999 and 2000.

In addition within the last 9 months the TMO (Traffic Management Organization) a non-profit organization in conjunction with Public Works Transportation and the city ITS Department has developed a web-based software program that provides an on line internet map of the Central Business District displaying the streets and sidewalks that are being obstructed. This information provided on the map is obtained by the issuance of obstruction permits issued by Public Works Transportation. Transportation will be using the program daily as part of their regular efforts. It will be located on the City of Minneapolis web site and will be offered to the public within the next couple of weeks with the assistance from the City Communication office. There have been many hours of testing of the product through the assistance from the TMO and Target Corporation. The final product looks to be a valuable tool for informing the public of existing traffic congestion hotspots which will help them in planning there route into and out of the city. City staff will have a PowerPoint presentation available to demonstrate the proposed web site. See attached handout.